

SEMINAR ON KUCHIPUDI DANCE

A brief Report

THE Andhra Pradesh Sangeeta Nataka Akademi conducted a Kuchipudi Dance Seminar on the 28th February and 1st March, 1959 in the Tilak Memorial Hall, Hyderabad.

Veteran dancers, eminent scholars and persons interested in this art assembled to discuss various aspects of the Kuchipudi dance style. The Seminar was also attended by Kumari Nirmala Joshi, Secretary, Sangeet Natak Akademi, Delhi. Among the observers were the Vice-Chairman and Administrator of the Bharatiya Kala Kendra, College of Dancing in Delhi.

The proceedings began at 3 P. M. on 28th February with a prayer by Shrimati R. Janaki Devi. Then Nataraj Ramakrishna, Convenor, welcomed the delegates and others attending the Seminar.

Shri L. N. Gupta, Honorary Secretary to the Andhra Pradesh Akademi, read the messages received, wishing the conference success. Among those who sent messages were Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Prime Minister of India, Dr. Justice P.V. Rajamannar, Chairman of the Sangeet Natak Akademi, Shri Bhimsen Sachar, Governor of Andhra Pradesh, Dr. B. Ramakrishna Rao, Governor of Kerala and Dr. V. Raghavan.

Shri S. B. P. Pattabhi Ramarao, Education Minister, Andhra Pradesh, then inaugurated the Seminar. He spoke about the Kuchipudi dance and suggested the steps that should be taken for developing this art. After his speech Shri R. B. Ramakrishna Raju, President of the Andhra Akademi, explained the purpose of the Seminar.



A demonstration by Smt. Vaidehi and Smt. Induvadana

The first session came to an end with thanks-giving by Shri L. N. Gupta.

The Second Session started under the presidentship of Shri R. B. Ramakrishna Raju at 5 P. M.

Acharya Shri Vissa Appa Rao in his learned paper discussed the historic development of Kuchipudi dancing and its distinctive features.

After this paper an interesting demonstration of the method of training students was given by members of Shri Chinta Krishna Murthy Party. This demonstration included rigorous exercises for various *angas* and *upangas* of the body necessary to bring grace and expressiveness to the performance.

Shri Putcha Venkata Subrahmanya Sastry gave an elaborate explanation of the four kinds of Abhinaya described in Natyasastra and showed how they exist in Kuchipudi style of dancing.

That night from 9 P. M. the party of Shri Chinta Krishna Murthy enacted pieces from

Bhamakalapam, Bhakta Prahlada, and Gollakalabam, to a packed house.

1st March, 1959 :

The Fourth Session of the Seminar began at 9 A. M.

Papers were presented by a number of scholars. In his paper, Dr. M. Rama Rao described the greatness of Nritta Ratnavali written by Jayapasena and its relation to the Kuchipudi dance tradition.

Shri Ayyanki Tandava Krishna described how the Kuchipudi dance tradition had spread beyond the boundaries of Andhra and influenced the dances of other places.

Other speakers like Shri C. V. V. R. Prasad, Shri A. Venkata Ramaiah and Shri Banda Kanakalingeswara Rao suggested various ways and means to preserve and develop Kuchipudi dance style.

Shri Lanka Suryanarayana Sastry described how in Kuchipudi dance tradition, the males have been playing the roles of women very

Shri V. Satyanarayana in the role of Gollabhama



successfully and added that in the present context women should be trained to play the roles of women.

Natraj Ramakrishna described the Aradhana and Kelika dances which are in vogue in the temples and emphasized the necessity for preserving this art which has till now been preserved by the Deva Dasis.

The highlight of the Session, however, was an illuminating demonstration of Gollakalapam as performed by the Deva Dasis.

Smt. Vaidehi and Smt. Induvandana of Manampally, able exponents of this style, rendered the *Pindotpathi Krama* in delightful Sanskrit. Starting with a benedictory verse *Amba Prarthana*, the main singer—*Gollabhama* offered *Pushpanjali* and *Ganapati Vandana* and then came to the story of creation. Reciting a Vedic *mantra*, she elaborated its meaning in Sanskrit and then an explanation in Telugu. The whole cycle of life—from birth to death, several duties prescribed for men in the texts—*Karma Kanda* were detailed. This description was interspersed with songs and dances.

Other speakers included Bhagavatulu Ramakotiah and Kumari Kanchanamala. The latter gave a comparative demonstration of the Kuchipudi and the Tanjor Natya Sampradayas.

In the evening at 3 p. m. all the scholars, artistes and other interested in this dance met and held discussions and unanimously passed the resolutions given, below, regarding the steps to be taken for the development of Kuchipudi Dance tradition.

From 9 p. m. Shri Chinta Krishna Murthy and Party enacted a full length dance-drama *Usha Parinayam*. A packed house witnessed the performance which lasted till the early hours of the next day. Shri Brahmanand Reddi presented on behalf of the Akademi, a gold bracelet to Shri Vedantham. Satyanarayana Sarma, who did the part of Usha admirably and congratulated the artistes who took part in this dance-drama, enacted so successfully.

The programme of the Seminar was filmed and recorded by Shri Govind Vidyarthi, who was deputed by the Sangeet Natak Akademi.

The Seminar concluded with the offering of thanks by Shri Ramakrishna Raju to the invitees, artistes and others.